

From the desk of

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Message from Executive Director/APCO on MDAQMD's response to COVID-19

The High Desert and Palo Verde Valley are tight-knit communities. We're all continually adjusting to the impacts felt in our region from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. I'm filled with hope from the good I've seen in businesses and organizations banding together to do the right thing for our collective health, as well as the residents who are doing what they can in their limited capacity to support our business community.

As an essential public health agency and active participant of the communities in our region, the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District has taken steps to protect the health of our staff and stakeholders while continuing to provide essential public services and meet our mission of reducing air pollution throughout our jurisdiction. We continue to monitor and communicate air quality information to the public, respond to complaints, work with businesses to fulfill their air quality needs, keep our vendors and grantees paid, and maintain other essential services. We will continue to fulfill our duty in protecting the public's health and quality of life while taking every step to protect the safety of our staff and communities.

We are aware of how disruptive this pandemic has been to our business community and will work closely with those we regulate to understand the evolving situation and associated impacts, as well as develop options for meeting air quality obligations.

In response to evolving recommendations from public health authorities, we have taken a number of steps to adjust our operations with a focus on safety and ensuring business continuity. On Feb. 28, we began regularly communicating with staff on CDC recommendations for social distancing and handwashing, switched to CDC-recommended cleaning products and by March 19 MDAQMD's staff began telecommuting with full operational capacity. The District has postponed all discretionary travel and is shifting all public meetings to online meetings and teleconferences, and much more. We continue to closely monitor this evolving situation and adjust as necessary to meet the needs of our communities.

I want to thank our staff, our residents and our businesses for being adaptive and patient as we all navigate these challenges as a community. We appreciate your understanding as we continue to develop and implement rapidly evolving policy enhancements and work practice improvements to ensure that our services continue to be available.

I remain confident we will all get through this by working together in these difficult times.

– end –

MOJAVE DESERT AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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